

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-06 ISO-00 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

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FM AMCONSUL LUANDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3643

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY PARIS

CINCLANT NORFOLK VA

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUANDA 0702

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI AO

SUBJECT: FNLA LOSES MORE GROUND

1. SUMMARY. MPLA HAS DEFEATED FNLA IN THE DEMBOS AND SECURED ITS ETHNIC AREA. CABINDA CITY IS NOW CONTROLLED BY MPLA. FNLA WON IN CARMONA. OVERALL, MPLA CAME OUT WELL AHEAD AND IN AN IMPROVED POSITION FOR THE NEXT ROUND WHICH MAY ALREADY BE BEGINNING. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING DISCUSSIONS WITH A PORTUGUESE INTELLIGENCE OFFICER AND AN FNLA COMMANDER WE HAVE SOME RELIABLE INFORMATION ON WHICH TO ASSESS THE RECENT BATTLES.

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3. DEMBOS - THE AREA 50-150 MILES NORTHEAST OF LUANDA, FROM CAXITO TO QUITEXE, IS AHKIMBUNDO AREA AND MPLA SOUNDLY DEFEATED FNLA IN ALL THE ENCOUNTERS THERE, SAVE QUITEXE. FNLA WITHDREW ALL ITS TROOPS FROM THE DEMBOS, BUT DID MANAGE TO KEEP A TOEHOLD IN QUITEXE.

4. LUANDA-MALANGE: THE LUANDA-MALANGE AXIS IS THE GEOGRAPHICAL AND LOGISTICAL BACKBONE OF MPLA AND THE KIMBUNDO. MPLA FORCED FNLA OUT OF MOST OF THE SIGNIFICANT POINTS ALONG THIS ROUTE, ALTHOUGH FNLA GARRISONS HUNG ON IN SALAZAR AND MALANGE. THE ROAD, OVER WHICH FLOWS ALMOST ALL OF LUANDA'S MEAT AND FOODSTUFFS, IS ENTIRELY IN THE CONTROL OF MPLA, ALTHOUGH PORTUGUESE MILITARY CONVOYS ARE ALLOWED TO PASS.

5. CABINDA: MPLA FORCED FNLA OUT OF CABINDA CITY AFTER TWO DAYS OF OFF AND ON FIGHTING. THERE IS NO WORD WHERE FNLA TROOPS FLED.

6. CARMONA AND NORTH: THE ONLY BRIGHT SPOT FOR FNLA WAS ITS DEFEAT OF MPLA IN CARMONA, NEGAGE AND SMALLER TOWNS IN UIGE DISTRICT. THIS AREA IS ETHNICALLY BAKONGO AND FNLA'S VICTORY GIVES IT COMPLETE DOMINANCE OF THE ENTIRE BAKONGO AREA OF UIGE AND ZAIRE DISTRICTS EXCEPT FOR MPLA GARRISONS IN SAN ANTONIO DO ZAIRE

AT THE MOUTH OF THE CONGO RIVER AND BENZE, 50 MILES EAST.

7. A FRONT LINE OF SORTS NOW EXISTS WHICH PARALLELS THE ETHNIC BORDER BETWEEN THE BAKONGOS AND THE KIMBUNDOS. THE FRONT RUNS FROM CAXITO (13 DEGREES 40'E/8 DEGREES 35'S) TO QUITEXE (15 DEGREES 02'E/7 DEGREES 58'S) TO CAMABATELA (15 DEGREES 15'E/8 DEGREES 10'S) TO DUQUE DE BRAGANCA (16 DEGREES 0'E/09 DEGREES 05'S) AND TO MALANGE (16 DEGREES 20'E/9 DEGREES 35'S). NORTH OF THIS LINE FNLA HAS ABSOLUTE CONTROL AND SOUTH OF IT MPLA PREDOMINATES.

8. MPLA'S WIDESPREAD COORDINATED STRIKES ON MAY 28-29 IN THE DEMBOS AND JUNE 2 IN CABINDA CARRIED THE FIELD. THEIR CONTROL OF CAXITO IS THE SINGLE STRATEGIC PRIZE IN THE BATTLES AS THIS PROHIBITS FNLA FROM REINFORCING ITS LUANDA AREA GARRISONS. AS THIS IS BEING WRITTEN (1500Z ON JUNE 5) HEAVY FIRING IS BEING REPORTED IN SEVERAL AREAS OF LUANDA AND IT IS POSSIBLE MPLA IS TAKING ADVANTAGE OF ITS TEMPORARY LOCAL SUPERIORITY TO ELIMINATE FNLA

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FROM THE CITY. IN ANY EVENT MPLA IS IN A MUCH IMPROVED POSITION TO BLUNT ANY ATTACK FROM THE NORTH BY FNLA, AND TO EFFECTIVELY KEEP FNLA AND UNITA MILITARILY SEPARATED.
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